REMARKS

By this amendment, an Abstract has been inserted, multiple dependencies have been eliminated from the claims, and the claims have been otherwise amended to comply with standard U.S. practice and improve the clarity of the invention. Claims 20-39 are pending. Examination on the merits of the instant application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

#35,509

Date: May 11, 2001

for Franklin D. Wolffe
Reg. No. 19,724

Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.
1001 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001-4597
(202) 508-9100

Attachment:
1. Abstract of the Disclosure

FDW:lab

Marked-Up Version of Amendments Made

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification has been amended herein as follows:

The paragraph at lines 14-19 on page 1 has been amended as follows:

~~Such~~ A~~a~~pparatus for coating objects by PVD are generally known. They are for instance used to apply a thin layer of metal on plastics to give the object the appearance of metal. Examples hereof are for instance caps for cosmetics bottles, prizes such as presented at sporting events, car components and the like.

The paragraph at lines 22-26 on page 2 has been amended as follows:

The object of the present invention is therefore to provide an apparatus with which metal coating with the associated preceding and following operations can take place as far as possible in an automated manner.

The paragraph at lines 1-2 on page 4 has been amended as follows:

If the buffers are adapted to move the carriers in a transverse direction, the buffers take up less space.

The paragraph at lines 5-12 on page 5 has been amended as follows:

Loading and unloading are understood to mean operations wherein the carriers remain on the transport path and the processed objects are exchanged for objects for processing, as well as operations wherein the carriers are removed from the transport path in their entirety and are re-placed on the transport path and wherein the actual loading and unloading of the carriers takes place at another location.

Marked-Up Version of Amendments Made

The paragraph at lines 16-21 on page 5 has been amended as follows:

This measure provides the advantage that the carriers can be used for different types of objects; only the object holders have to be exchanged.. This is particularly important in respect of the cost of the carriers; these carriers after all comprise expensive components manufactured with great precision.

The paragraph at lines 18-19 on page 8 has been amended as follows:

Shown in figure 3 is that part, of the transport device which functions as an unloading station.

The paragraph at lines 28-36 on page 10 has been amended as follows:

Figure 8 shows in more detail a part of the drive device for transport of carriers 15 inside the vacuum metallization device. The relevant elements are herein mounted on a plate 50, on which are arranged two beams 51 on which guide wheels 52 with guide shafts ~~52~~ are mounted. In the middle of each of these beams 51 a guide wheel 52 is further arranged on the other side of the path of the carrier. Finally, support wheels 53 are arranged.

The paragraph bridging pages 10 and 11 has been amended as follows:

Drive wheels ~~55~~ 54 are also arranged for driving the carrier 15. Drive wheels 54 are herein driven by means of belts 55. Both belts 55 are trained round a wheel 56 which is driven by a motor mounted beneath the plate. This drawing also shows that a check gate device is again placed in order to determine whether all objects are present on the carrier.

The paragraph at lines 27-35 on page 11 has been amended as follows:

Finally, figure 10 shows the construction of product carriers 15. The product carriers are placed on top of the extension shafts to carry the products for processing. In the present case, the product carriers are formed by a piece of threaded end which can be placed on the extension

Marked-Up Version of Amendments Made

shaft, wherein discs provided with internal thread can be placed on the threaded ends, the form and position of which discs can be adapted to the relevant products.